

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Racine St-Jacques, Jules. L'honneur et la foi. Le droit de résistance chez les Réformés français (1536–1581)

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concerned (Popper argues that the claims of Raleigh's atheism are overstated); as one might imagine, he had no shortage of critics in life as in death. Popper's own meticulous search through the marginalia of extant copies produced as many supporters of Raleigh as it did detractors, finding that the *History* could just as easily be read as an anti-Stuart polemic or an endorsement of royalism! The endless variety of interpretations, both of the Raleigh and his *History*, makes it is easy to see why he continues to fascinate.

Nicholas Popper's study is a fine piece of scholarship and a very welcome addition to the history of the early modern book. At the same time, it is an important contribution to our understanding of Renaissance historical studies that intellectual and political historians will equally find useful. Suffice it to say, Popper's study has done much to elevate the stature of Raleigh's pen to that of his sword.

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**Racine St-Jacques, Jules.**

*L'honneur et la foi. Le droit de résistance chez les Réformés français (1536–1581).*

Cahier d'Humanisme et Renaissance 107. Genève: Librairie Droz, 2012. Pp. 218. ISBN 978-2-600-01587-5 (paperback) \$57.60.

The rise of the Reformation in Europe opened a season of bitter fights between the followers of the traditional faith and those converted to the new doctrines formulated by Luther or Calvin. During the second half of the sixteenth century, France was set on fire by civil wars and manipulated by complex political plots and international power struggles. In this turbulent context, and more specifically within the Calvinist movement, there arose a heated discussion about the intricate political-religious and civil problem of reconciling obedience to the lawful sovereign and loyalty to God. This area remains a fertile field of investigation and historiographical reflection, which has seen significant results over the last few decades: consider, for example, Quentin Skinner's *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1978) and Paul-Alexis Mellet's *Les traités monarchomaques: confusion des temps, Résistance armée et monarchie*

*parfaite* (1560–1600) (Geneva, 2007). In line with these studies, Jules Racine St-Jacques's new book offers a thorough analysis of issues such as authority and freedom, obedience and resistance, absolutism and constitutionalism.

The first chapter, "1536–1559. Entre Saint Pierre et Saint Paul, les ambiguïtés de la pensée politique calvinienne," examines the theocentric interpretation that Calvin made while tracing the figure of the politician. At the outset, Racine St-Jacques properly reconstructs the religious, political, and ideological conventions that framed Calvin's efforts to deal with the question of whether to obey political authority or to defend against the repressive actions of an unfair or irreligious sovereign. He thus gives us the prelude to a lucid and suggestive reading of two texts fundamental to an understanding of Calvin's political thought: the sixteenth chapter of the *Institution de la religion chrestienne*, titled "Du gouvernement civil" and the *Sermon sur Daniel*. In the first text, following the dictates theorized by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, Calvin asserts that the followers of the "vraye foy" had to obey the secular power, as the king was invested as vicar and lieutenant of God on Earth. Racine St-Jacques acutely demonstrates the traces of ambiguity and contradiction in the thought of the reformer through the examination of some passages of the *Sermon sur Daniel*, inspired by the words of St. Peter, according to which one must obey God rather than men. This discrepancy, which emerges from a comparison of different texts of Calvin, was also the reason for conflicting interpretations among historians: in this regard the author concludes the first chapter with a long disquisition about "les risques de l'interprétation d'une pensée ambiguë."

In the second chapter, "1559–1568. L'honneur prend le pas: les multiples facettes du devoir nobiliaire," Racine St-Jacques goes on to consider the main factors—actors and authors who influenced and participated in the development of the Huguenot rising rhetoric—that would soon make a clean sweep of Calvin's resistance to legitimizing the armed action of princes of the blood against the entourage of the king in the name of noble honour. Racine St-Jacques's worthy analysis of a few political and religious texts, published at the turn of the brief reign of Francis II and during a large part of Charles IX's, gives insight into the ideals and arguments put forward by members of the Catholic party of Guise and the spiritual elite of the Huguenot movement. Excerpts from the main authors involved in these conflicts provide the reader with real knowledge of the relationship between historical events and writings that betray politically-motivated intentions. The work of each author is analyzed in

relation to the conflicts and controversies between the two sides and located in the ideological and political context of the time, with its language and its conventions, its audience and its main protagonists.

The events and consequences of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre are the focus of the analysis conducted in the third and final chapter, "1564–1581. Gestation et maturation d'une théorie de la résistance au tyran." The Huguenot theories of constitutional and revolutionary nature are analyzed through the treatises of those writers whom political historians call "monarchomaques": François Hotman, Théodore de Bèze, and Philippe Duplessis-Mornay. In this chapter, each text is seen not as the product of minds divorced from reality or absorbed in pure conceptual theorizing, but as the answer, varying in degrees of conceptual development, to specific political issues of the time.

The perspective that Racine St-Jacques brings to these widely-visited issues is certainly attractive and effective; the present volume is configured as a point of comparison and a valuable source of study for historians and scholars of religious life in sixteenth-century France and of modern political thought. Written in a style that is flowing and readable, this book is a tool for in-depth understanding—able to satisfy the curiosity of even non-specialist readers—with a large and accurate bibliographical appendix.

ANDERSON MAGALHÃES, *Università di Verona*

**Rouget, François.**

***Ronsard et le livre (II). Étude de critique génétique et d'histoire littéraire. Seconde partie: Les livres imprimés.***

Cahiers d'humanisme et Renaissance 109. Genève : Librairie Droz, 2012. 742 p. ISBN 978-2-600-01540-0 (broché) 78 \$.

Après avoir livré aux presses en 2010 le premier volet de son étude, consacré au rapport de Ronsard avec le livre manuscrit, qui y était envisagé à la fois comme objet de lecture et de travail, comme véhicule de transmission des textes et comme vecteur d'immortalité, François Rouget s'intéresse dans cette seconde partie à l'univers de l'imprimé, en adoptant toujours un point de vue très large. Rien de ce qui a fait la destinée éditoriale de ce poète, à son époque et au fil des